

Much more restrictive rules are needed on broadcast ownership. The lack of regulation in the marketplace has shrunk radio station diversity vastly and significantly. I no longer listen to music stations due to the incredibly homogenized playlists.

The fact that one company owns over 1200 stations and the next largest only holds 400 should be a shock to the people of this nation. The fact that virtually no independent music artists can make a dent in the rotation of commercial radio stations is an outright travesty. The music industry's downturn can be directly linked to the shrinking of radio stations playlists, which have entirely resulted from the lack of limits on ownership, thereby creating a market dominated by a very small number of players who desire only to create a uniform sound across their networks.

I am a musician and in 1996 I had a few songs that were receiving regional radio play in the southeast. Within 6 months of the 1996 telecommunications act that limited restrictions on broadcast ownership, every single station that was playing one of my independently released songs quit playing them. When calls were made to these stations as to why they quit playing them, they cited new ownership of the stations that required their playlists to conform to the corporate strategy. Numerous other bands and independent artists suffered the same fate. As a result, I quit writing music and left the music industry altogether for quite some time.

It is also quite clear that the only thing that matters to these radio conglomerates is the ability to sell ads at a higher rate. There is no concern for music, community or local issues.

I strongly urge you to work as hard as possible to reinstate the limits on broadcast ownership in order to restore the public trust in the airwaves and retrieve it from the corporate conglomerates that have paid to take it away from us.

Sincerely,
Michael Winger